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Cedar Park
Philadelphia
Philadelphia County
Pennsylvania

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HABS No. PA 133

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PA
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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORIC AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of Pennsylvania

Historic American Buildings Survey

Prepared at Washington Office

ADDENDUM
FOLLOWS...

Cedar Grove
Landsdowne Drive
Philadelphia
Philadelphia County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-1651

HABS,
PA
51-PHILA
231-

PHOTOGRAPHS

Historic American Buildings Survey
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20243

ADDENDUM TO
CEDAR GROVE
Landsdowne Drive
Fairmount Park
Philadelphia
Philadelphia County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-1651

HABS
PA
51-PHILA,
231-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL & DESCRIPTIVE DATA
PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY
National Park Service
U.S. Department of Interior
P.O. Box 37127
Washington D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

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ADDENDUM TO:
CEDAR GROVE

HABS NO. PA-1651

Location: Approximately 750' north of the intersection of Lansdowne and North Concourse Drives, West Fairmount Park, Philadelphia, Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania.

Significance: Between 1748 and 1750, Elizabeth Coates Paschall built Cedar Grove near her father's farm in Frankford, an area northeast of Philadelphia. Designed to serve as a modest summer retreat, the house was greatly altered and enlarged during the eighteenth century and moved to Fairmount Park in 1926. Cedar Grove contains many of its original eighteenth- and nineteenth-century furnishings and stands today as a monument to its builder, the Paschall-Morris family, and the Colonial Revival movement in America.

Description: Standing east of a crescent-shaped driveway off Lansdowne Drive, Cedar Grove is a two-and-a-half story, gambrel-roofed house built of a local, gray stone. Coursed, dressed ashlar and fifteen symmetrically-arranged bays give formal distinction to the southwest (front) facade, while the other walls consist of carefully-fitted rubblework and have irregular bay configurations. Roughly half of the rear or northeastern wall jogs forward, forming a projection that maintains the roof line. Attached to this projection is a one-bay, two-story wing that continues the house's southeastern, rubblework wall but gives way to brick on the other sides. The first two stories of the house are lit by nine-over-nine-light windows on the northwest and southwest sides, twelve-over-twelve-light windows on the southeast side and a combination of the two types on the northeast. A large lunette window with delicate, Federal-style muntins pierces the front gable. The other garret windows employ six-over-six-light sashes and include five dormers: two on the northwest pitch and three on the southeast. The latter dormers are divided by two chimneys, and another two chimneys protrude near the center of the roof. A porch with elongated Tuscan columns extends across the northwest and southwest sides, and the northeast side has a small porch of its own. Inside, four main rooms occupy each floor and are, in some instances, equipped with extensive cabinetry. On the first floor, these rooms all have exterior doors.

History: In 1746, Elizabeth Coates Paschall bought fifteen acres of land on Frankford Road next to her father's farm in Frankford. Her husband, a Quaker dry-goods merchant named Joseph Paschall, had died in 1742, and since then she had overseen his business and kept up their house in Philadelphia. While carrying out these urban responsibilities, she became interested in establishing a rural retreat, and the Frankford plot, approximately four miles northeast of the city, provided an ideal location. There she commissioned a small stone summer house that

came to be known as Cedar Grove. Construction began in 1748 and was largely the work of two men: Griffith Griffith, a stonemason, and John Hitchcock, a carpenter (Lindsey, 778). Other contractors performed the glazing, plastering and painting. The house they built contained only two sizeable rooms (a bedroom and parlor, accompanied by a garret and lean-to kitchen) but reflected a high level of craftsmanship and incorporated such costly features as a marble mantelpiece and multiple windows. Work was completed by 1750.

Two years later, Elizabeth Paschall extended the second story and garret backward over the one-story kitchen, making the house uniform in height. Throughout the 1750s she also cultivated and enlarged a medicinal herb garden on the grounds. After her death in 1768, the property passed first to her daughter Beulah, then to the latter's niece, Sarah Paschall. Sarah received Cedar Grove and married Isaac Wistar Morris in 1795; four years later they carried out a major remodelling campaign that doubled the size of the house and replaced the original gable roof with the present gambrel. The new (southeastern) half of the building maintained the earlier section's stonework and included a kitchen, parlor and bedrooms. Both Sarah Paschall and Isaac Wistar Morris came from established Quaker families and their children went on to play an active part in the Philadelphia Quaker community. During the first half of the nineteenth century, numerous formal and informal Quaker gatherings occurred at Cedar Grove, and perhaps the expansive porch or "piazza" added to the building in 1848 reflects this semi-public function.

Isaac and Sarah's son Isaac Paschall Morris inherited the estate in the early 1840s and around 1869 his daughter Lydia Thompson Morris became the next owner. She occupied the house until 1888 when the increasingly industrial character of the Frankford area prompted her to move to Compton, her family's country seat in Chestnut Hill. Thereafter, Cedar Grove stood vacant, but its fate was secured by the Morris family's generosity and an increasing public interest in America's colonial past. After receiving the Fairmount Park Commission's approval, Lydia Morris had the house documented, dismantled and reconstructed in the western half of the park. The project began in 1926 and was completed two years later. In previous decades, Lydia and her brother John had gathered furnishings that their family had traditionally used at the house, and these they donated to the Philadelphia Museum of Art. The Museum agreed to administer Cedar Grove and initially arranged its contents in accordance with Lydia Morris' Colonial-Revival-inspired conceptions of interior decoration. Since then, Museum staff have periodically adjusted their interpretation and treatment of the property in light of historical research.

Sources:

Cedar Grove Files. Fairmount Park Commission. Office of the Park Historian, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Halpern, Martha Crary (Department of American Art, Philadelphia Museum of Art). Interview, 7/10/1995.

Lindsey, Jack L. "Cedar Grove: A Quaker Farmhouse Near Philadelphia." The Magazine Antiques 146, no. 6 (1994): 776-785.

Phipps, Kellie. "Cedar Grove: A Fairmount Park Historic District Villa," a report compiled for University of Pennsylvania Professor Roger W. Moss, 1994; useful primarily for its bibliography and the following appendices: National Register nomination (also by Phipps), annotated chain of title, and various nineteenth-century fire insurance surveys.

Historian: Aaron Wunsch, HABS Summer Historian.

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